



Job Description

Job Title: Tenant Counselor (Spanish/Bilingual)

Department: Stabilization Services

Status: Non-Exempt

Supervisor: Supportive Services Manager

Salary Grade: 25

FTE: 1.0

Solid Ground believes poverty is solvable. Our communities are stronger when we support stability and break down the barriers to overcoming poverty. Solid Ground does both. We combine direct services with advocacy to meet basic needs, nurture success, and spread change. Through our programs, people gain stability and build skills that equip them to move forward in their lives. Through advocacy, we work toward ending racism and other oppressions embedded in our institutions, policies, and culture that hold people back from succeeding. We bring the voices of people experiencing poverty into the political process, furthering social justice and supporting our entire community to reach its potential.

- Demonstrate the initiative to learn and enhance skills that promote anti-racism, cultural competency and an understanding of oppression and its impact
- Participate in intentional learning efforts, including events relating to understanding and dismantling institutional racism and building cultural competency

Job Summary: The Tenant Counselor is a part of the Supportive Services team. This position is responsible for providing timely and accurate assistance to individuals facing the loss of their rental housing, providing accurate referrals to community resources via hotline calls, workshops, and community events, leading community education and outreach activities, assisting tenants in organizing to address concerns with landlords, providing in agency landlord/tenant expertise, participating in relevant committees and organizations focusing on housing issues; tracking client trends and advocating for systems changes to address needed improvements in housing issues.

Essential Responsibilities, Duties and Tasks:

35% Provide staff coverage during regularly scheduled shifts on the Tenant Counseling Services hotline. Conduct thorough intake; inform households of their rights and responsibilities under applicable WA

State rental housing laws, connect callers to community services, (including legal representation) for housing issues and other crisis related social services. Be highly knowledgeable about strategies to help households maintain housing stability. Provide customer-service oriented one-on-one tenant counseling to households who are at imminent risk of losing their housing or need assistance with asserting their rights as provided under WA State rental housing laws. Address circumstances that affect household's ability to stay housed and maintain rent payments including discussion of action plans to resolve housing issues and prepare tenants to negotiate with landlords to implement agreements to help households maintain housing. Provide in-house support in understanding Landlord/Tenant Laws and responsibilities. Track engagement with callers and workshop participants using agency Database. Provide templates and sample letters for tenants to assist in asserting their rights.

- 25% Conduct outreach and education to inform the community on housing stability issues such as tenant rights and responsibilities, fair housing laws, legislative advocacy, etc., via in person interactions, blog posts and social media, and resource broadcasting; develop partner sites and opportunities for tenant educational workshops; develop, improve and maintain topical and cultural relevance of tenant education information and outreach materials. Update materials as laws change and as needed, partner with local legal providers to ensure successful referrals, work with internal partners such as Residential Services to increase access to information and opportunities to advocate for tenant rights, coordinate with partner agencies in providing joint workshops and clinics, participate in resource fairs and community resource exchanges providing information on landlord/tenant laws.
- 20% Collect and analyze client issues that are trending for the purpose of advocacy to inform local and statewide organizations of issues that most negatively affect the long-term stability of tenants, especially for at-risk populations; represent tenant issues at community meetings. Participate in local and statewide advocacy by testifying at legislative hearings, assisting clients with getting involved, writing letters, etc. Assist with organizing tenants to address concerns with landlords that have not been resolved through other means.
- 10% Maintain accurate and confidential client files and documentation necessary for program administration and funding requirements using agency Database. Submit client success stories quarterly to support reporting. Enter client information during hotline calls whenever possible into database or within 48 hours after the call. Manage requests for information in an efficient manner while maintaining a high level of customer service.
- 10% Participate in case conferencing with other staff on the Tenant Counseling Services and other Solid Ground teams. Provide coverage for peers during vacation or leaves of absence. Coordinate advocacy programs, legislative involvement and civic engagement in city and state initiatives that impact renters. Assist in continual program evaluation efforts, development of systems and procedures to enhance Tenant Counseling Services; participate in program, department, agency and outside organization meetings and committees as required and/or desired.

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

Education and Experience:

Requires one of the following:

- a) At least four years of experience in a social service or related setting; **OR**
- b) Bachelor's Degree in Social Work or other related field with two years of experience in social service-related setting; **OR**
- c) Any combination of education, experience, and measurable performance which demonstrates the capability to perform the duties of this position.

Also requires:

- Experience in housing counseling, case management for households in crisis/at risk of homelessness or other relevant experience.
- Experience in landlord/tenant law, negotiation/mediation or other relevant counseling/customer service experience where negotiation/mediation were essential components of the work.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Excellent organizational, verbal and written communication skills
- Experience serving low-income communities or demonstrated interest in housing issues affecting low-income communities; provide support services for clients in crisis/at risk of homelessness
- Self-motivated with an ability to prioritize and problem solve
- Ability to understand and communicate legal information as it relates to rental housing in Seattle and Washington State
- Ability to build collaborations to access resources for clients
- Ability to work individually in a self-directed manner and as part of a team, as well as represent the agency in community partnerships and in advocacy efforts
- Willingness and ability to work with people from a variety of racial, cultural, educational and economic backgrounds with various lifestyles and sexual orientations
- Access to reliable vehicle, valid driver's license, clean driving records and willingness to drive as needed throughout King County
- Demonstrated ability to use computer software (Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, Internet) to perform data entry, write correspondence, maintain statistics, use email and calendar, and other computer related tasks

- Ability and willingness to work evenings and weekends for the purposes of teaching housing-related workshops and/or meeting with clients who are unable to meet during business hours.
- Demonstrated Bilingual skills both oral and written in Spanish

Desired Qualifications:

Experience or interest in the legislative process and advocating for changes to Landlord-Tenant Laws or issues that pertain to tenants.

Physical Demands/Working Conditions: This position works in an office setting, performing general office duties. Position requires employee to lift/carry up to 30 pounds rarely, 10-15 pounds occasionally and push/pull 10 pounds seldom, 5 pounds frequently. Employees spend 65% of their time in the office with 60% of this time on the computer and 30% of the time answering the phone and 35% of their time in the field. Work outside the office is 20% facilitating workshops, 10% meetings/trainings, and 5% organizing support and participating in advocacy. Position has the ability to sit/stand as needed. Stairs may be required depending on locations of meetings, workshops etc.

Hours and Compensation: This is a union position paying \$22.44 per hour plus benefits. Benefits include medical, dental, short-term and long-term disability insurance, basic life insurance, 401(k) savings plan including agency contribution and match, holiday pay, generous paid personal leave package and tax-sheltered health care and dependent care accounts.

To Apply: Internal Applicants **must complete the Solid Ground Application Form** specific to this position. You may also leave a message on our job line at 206.694.6840 requesting a specific job application, or you may apply in person at 1501 North 45th Street in Seattle's Wallingford neighborhood. **Please attach a cover letter and resume**

Internal Closing Date: 10 March, 2020 at 5 p.m.

Solid Ground is an equal opportunity employer committed to workplace diversity. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race and color, religion, marital status, national origin, disability or veteran status